

*Senate Civil Liberties
Committee*

Dear Sol,

3/17/93

There was a segment on last night's NBC-TV News that got me to reminiscing. It was a sort-of kindergarten in the White House slur. They'd picked out very young people working there, dressed informally. I do not recall many, if any, older people in the pictures.

The young fogies who put that together do not know their own country's fairly recent history that we were part of. I doubt that Clinton has as many really young people working in his administration as FDR did. Or as many in fairly responsible positions.

Can there be much difference between Stephanopoulos's age and Bill Moyers under LBJ?

Remember our Senate committee? Could the mean age of those who wrote the reports have been 30? And were those reports good? Really absolutely solid? And with significant social and political significance? I can't remember any error in any of them.

When I was only about 23 I prepared the brief for the committee's first hearing. It was either assumed that I was prepared to do it or there was nobody else to do it. And it was successful. It made the record the committee wanted made. And until I was told to do it I did not even know what it was, not even the form, leave alone the procedures and the content! As of the time I did it I'd never even seen a transcript, stenographic or printed, of any hearing. Not that I can recall.

I'd been investigating in Cleveland and Akron when I was told to return on a Friday. Not much rest on the overnight train back. And when back in Washington the first thing I learned is that I no longer lived where I'd lived and had no idea where I did live! The young men with whom I lived, of whom you knew Iz Salkind and Sam Rhinestone, had found a place they liked better and had just moved into it. So there I was, needing clothing, having no idea where mine was and no time to replace it. And given a strange assignment to have completed for a Tuesday morning hearing. Which meant that I had to have it completed on Monday in time for those above me on the staff to be satisfied with it or have changes made in it and then the Senators had to be satisfied with it or say what they wanted done. (I do not recall any changes and there was not time for many, if any!) I did not get to leave the office, once I went to my former apartment and found I did not live in it any more, until after the hearing was over. And that without xerox machines, too, when the hearing was built on documentation. In that case documentation that all of us had from time to time pieced together after it had been torn up by the labor-spy outfit that was the subject of the investigation. All that we used had to be retyped, copies by carbon only.

In terms of normal working days I had a full day, most of a day and about a half-day. Actually, I worked from the time I began until I was finished, taking a sponge bath in those pre-air conditioning days in the middle of the night when nobody else was around. But had to wear the same sweated-up clothing again.

I returned to this with turmoil swirling all around me because I had started an unauthorized investigation of what turned into a major one, of phony "citizens' committees" financed and controlled by the major local industries but pretendedly independent and causing major social and industrial problems to beat down the poor depression-day wages of the era. That investigation meant the end of those evils. It came later. The investigation the hearing I was told to prepare for without the remotest notion of what it was or how to do it was the beginning of the end of the evil of the labor spying of that era. Our exposure of it, in a series of hearings, not only informed the nation, it informed the hard-heads of the major industries that they were great losers from their heartless practises. As I recall now, it was General Motors that first recognized this and ended that policy, with a public announcement of it. People today have no idea of what the labor spying of that period entailed and meant. It took out hearings to educate those who paid for it that they were hurting themselves by it. And that is the General Motors that financed and directed what called itself "The Black Legion," terrible thugs. ^{GMS} whose director of "security" whose name I still recall, Harry Anderson, told the National Industrial Conference Board that its members needed their own Black Legions. And I was only 23 when I prepared the beginning of it, a major social and industrial change in the nation and for the movers and shakers as well as the pols they owned.

NBC erred in putting down caring youth in government. Government needs caring youth who have the capabilities and their greater energy and fewer inhibitions.

I was by far the youngest editor on the Hill and in almost no time I had the reputation of turning out the best hearings and reports. Not even a typo in them. Older men respected that and helped all they could. Guy Ives, the Senate's printing clerk, old enough to be my grandfather, put every corner he could for me. So did the seniors at the Government Printing Office, on the night side. These older men liked a youngster's trying harder and doing better. As a result of their liking and respect I was able to do all sorts of things that came to mind so I could do my job better, serve the press, then only the print press, as well as possible when there were no duplicating means other than impossible photostating. The GPO gave me all the galley proofs I asked for. All of them were made, then called "pulled," by hand. Innumerable copies of hundreds of pages of galleys, not uncommonly about a hundred ^{sheets} at a time. Among those who got them regularly I remember Izzy Stone, who had not yet changed his name, and was on the old New York Post. *many reporters and scholars*

While I was the youngest on the staff by about a year, maybe two, the staff was largely young people, like you. Others I remember were only slightly older than you. Dan Margolies, who later worked at State. Dave Lloyd, who later was in the Truman White House and then headed his library's Washington office. ^{later} Jack Burke, a typist who became an investigator was, I think, a year or so younger than I. Those at the top were in their 30s.

And this was largely true throughout the government and on the Hill, among the new

people who not only poured into Washington to be part of what FDR indicated he wanted to do but also had no other jobs or no good jobs or no jobs with real meaning to them. And the hours some worked! Without overtime pay, without asking for it.

Today nobody knows anything about our committee and what it did. It did much, the country was ever so much better off for it, and what it did it could not have done without us youngsters, of the age NBC last night sought to ridicule or put down in the White House.

Moreover, I believe, change requires youth and we sure need change!

Older people are pretty much locked into what they have been doing and into doing it the way they had been doing it. Young people are no so much captives of the past, the old ways, the old thinking.

While nobody worked the hours I did, all the lawyers often worked far into the early mornings. I recall that several times, when the date for the appearance of a report had been set, I worked without getting home for five days at a time. And the report came reports came out on time and were at the Senate chambers before the session started. How many older men could have worked such hours? Or have been able to take the time to seek perfection? How many with families that we younger men did not have yet?

To a large degree this was also true of the clerical staff. The stenos worked unheard of hours, and we ^{only a} had few. Each item used at a hearing had to be typed, with clean and legible carbon copies. There was no other copying practical or available. There was only a little mimeographing. and there were then no other means of duplicating, only typing. In those days the better jobs, the more responsible jobs, were denied women.

Remember Frances Wheeler, Senate Bert Wheeler's daughter who was a volunteer on the staff, and very able? Many a night I drove her home after midnight. (And as it later happened out first TV was one one of her brothers discarded for a newer model. Through one of our investigators she married, Allen Saylor. I'd cooked the first solid food their first child ate the day Allen brought the TV up and installed it.)

Most of us youngsters then worked for less than we should have gotten even by the scales of that period, too. And we did not look for the available better-paying jobs, either.

It is unheard of today for a Congressional committee to meet its responsibilities with an appropriation of only \$50,000, to last a year. Somehow we did it. With most of us on the payrolls of executive agencies- from which I often cadged some of our supplies.

It was a ~~different~~ different world then. Supplies reminds me of all those torn-up labor-spy records we all found time to help tape together. That was the first time I saw Scotch tape. It came only in the large rolls, 1" wide.

It was a world that had to change. Change then, as always, requires youth. So, I say 22 days before my 80th birthday, more power to the White House kindergarten!

Best,
Harold